

CLAIMS

5 I CLAIM:

Sub 17 1. In a telecommunications system functionally interconnecting a service switching point, a service control point, and an intelligent network element, and the telecommunications system including a billing system functionally connected at least
10 to the service control point, the billing system including telecommunications accounts for charging fees to subscribers with respect to telecommunications services provided to the subscribers, a method for using a communication to conduct a transaction with respect to a telecommunications account, comprising:

15 A. receiving the communication at the service switching point, the communication being associated with a calling line number;

B. causing the service switching point to route the communication to the intelligent network element;

C. causing the intelligent network element to obtain a telecommunications account number and a transaction amount from the communication,

20 the telecommunications account number corresponding to the telecommunications account with respect to which the transaction is to be conducted in the billing system;

25 D. in response to obtaining the telecommunications account number and the transaction amount, causing the intelligent network element to provide the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number associated with the communication to the service control point;

E. in response to receipt of the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number, causing the service control point to

make the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number available to the billing system; and

F. causing the billing system

5 i. to obtain the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number, and

ii. to conduct the transaction in the billing system with respect to the telecommunications account associated with the telecommunications account number by crediting the telecommunications account by at least the transaction amount,

10 whereby the transaction is conducted by the billing system by using the telecommunications account number and the transaction amount provided by the communication and made available to the billing system by the intelligent network element and the service control point in order to credit the telecommunications account corresponding to the telecommunications account number in the billing
15 system by at least the transaction amount.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the transaction amount comprises a number of units or a dollar amount; and

20 wherein action F comprises causing the billing system to conduct the transaction by crediting the telecommunications account by at least the number of units or by at least the dollar amount.

25 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the telecommunications account number comprises a different account number from a calling line number account corresponding to the calling line number associated with the communication is received at the service switching point; and

wherein action F further comprises causing the billing system to conduct the transaction in the billing system by debiting the calling line number account by at least the transaction amount.

5 4. The method of Claim 1, wherein prior to causing the service control point to make the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number available to the billing system, the method further comprises causing the service control point to carry out a validation whose result comprises a determination that the calling line number is authorized with respect to conduct of the
10 transaction.

 5. The method of Claim 4, wherein action C comprises causing the intelligent network element to obtain a personal identification number (PIN) from the communication, and wherein the validation comprises comparing the PIN for
15 correspondence to a stored PIN associated with the calling line number.

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20 6. The method of Claim 4, wherein the validation comprises comparing the telecommunications account number for correspondence to a stored telecommunications account number associated with the calling line number.

 7. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
 G. causing the service control point to provide a confirmation regarding the conduct of the transaction to the intelligent network element; and
 H. in response to receipt of the confirmation, causing the intelligent
25 network element to provide an announcement to the communication.

 8. The method of Claim 1, wherein action E comprises causing the service control point to make the telecommunications account number, the transaction

amount, and the calling line number available to the billing system by including the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number in a billing message and by posting the billing message for obtaining by the billing system.

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9. The method of Claim 8, wherein action F comprises causing the billing system to obtain the telecommunications account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number by obtaining the billing message posted by the service control point.

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37 / 10. A method for using a communication in a telecommunications network to execute a transaction with respect to an account, comprising:

5 A. receiving a communication on a calling line associated with a calling line number;

B. obtaining an account number and a transaction amount from the communication, the account number corresponding to an account with respect to which a transaction is to be conducted, the account differing from a calling line number account associated with the calling line number;

10 C. creating a billing message with respect to the calling line number, the
billing message including the account number, the transaction amount, and the calling
line number; and

D. using the account number and the transaction amount from the billing message to execute the transaction with respect to the account corresponding to the account number.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the communication is directed to a special access code; and

wherein actions B - D are responsive to the communication being directed to
20 the special access code.

12. The method of Claim 10, wherein the transaction amount comprises a number of units or a dollar amount; and

wherein action D comprises using the account number, and the number of units
25 or the dollar amount, to execute the transaction by crediting the account by at least the
number of units or by at least the dollar amount and by debiting the calling line
number account by at least the number of units or by at least the dollar amount.

13. The method of Claim 10, further comprising:
E. charging the calling number line account associated with the calling line number a fee for the transaction.

5 14. The method of Claim 10, further comprising:
E. providing the communication with an announcement regarding the transaction.

10 15. The method of Claim 10, wherein prior to obtaining the account number and the transaction amount from the communication, the method further comprises making a validation whose result comprises a determination that the calling line number is authorized with respect to conduct of the transaction.

15 Sub 15 16. The method of Claim 15, wherein the validation comprises:
i. obtaining a personal identification number (PIN) from the communication, and
ii. checking that the PIN corresponds to a stored PIN associated with the calling line number.

20 17. The method of Claim 15, wherein the validation comprises comparing the account number for correspondence to a stored account number associated with the calling line number.

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18. In a system for billing fees to subscribers for provision of telecommunications services, each subscriber having a telecommunications account in the system, the telecommunications account being associated with at least one calling line number, a method to conduct a transaction with respect to a telecommunications account in the system, comprising:

A. obtaining a billing message generated as a result of a telecommunications service performed with respect to a calling line number;

B. in response to obtaining of the billing message, making a determination that the billing message includes an indication that a transaction is to be conducted with respect to a telecommunications account in the system; and

C. in response to the determination, conducting the transaction with respect to the telecommunications account.

19. The method of Claim 18, wherein action C comprises conducting the transaction with respect to the telecommunications account by crediting the telecommunications account by at least a number of units or a dollar amount, and/or debiting a different telecommunications account by at least the number of units and/or by at least the dollar amount, the different telecommunications account being associated with the calling line number receiving the telecommunications service that generated the billing message.

20. The method of Claim 18, wherein the indication comprises transaction information; and

wherein action C comprises conducting the transaction using the transaction information with respect to the telecommunications account.

26. In a telecommunications system wherein a billing message is created with respect to a communication, wherein the billing message is further created with respect to a calling line number account corresponding to a calling line number associated with the communication, and wherein the billing message is obtained by a billing system having access to the calling line number account and to other accounts, a method for execution of a transaction in the billing system between the calling line number account and one of the other accounts to which the billing system has access, comprising:

A. providing that the billing message includes an indication for the execution of the transaction,

B. causing the billing system to make a recognition of the indication in the billing message; and

C. in response to the indication in the billing message, causing the billing system to execute the transaction between the calling line number account and the one of the other accounts.

27. The method of Claim 26, wherein action C comprises causing the billing system to execute the transaction by crediting the one of the other accounts by at least a number of units or a dollar amount, and/or debiting the calling line number account by at least the number of units and/or by at least the dollar amount.

28. The method of Claim 27, wherein action C comprises causing the billing system to execute the transaction by debiting the calling line number account by a service fee for the transaction.

29. The method of Claim 26, wherein the indication comprises transaction information; and

34. In a telecommunications system functionally interconnecting a service switching point, a service control point, and an intelligent network element, and the telecommunications system including a billing system functionally connected at least to the service control point, the billing system including accounts for conducting transactions, a method for using a communication to conduct a transaction with respect to an account, comprising:
- A. receiving the communication at the service switching point, the communication being associated with a calling line number;
 - 10 B. causing the service switching point to route the communication to the intelligent network element;
 - C. causing the intelligent network element to obtain an account number and a transaction amount from the communication,
the account number corresponding to the account with respect to
15 which the transaction is to be conducted in the billing system;
 - D. in response to obtaining the account number and the transaction amount, causing the intelligent network element to provide the account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number associated with the communication to the service control point;
 - 20 E. in response to receipt of the account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number, causing the service control point to make the account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number available to the billing system by including the account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number in a billing message and by posting the billing message for obtaining by the
25 billing system; and
 - F. causing the billing system

i. to obtain the account number, the transaction amount, and the calling line number by obtaining the billing message posted by the service control point, and

5 ii. to conduct the transaction in the billing system with respect to the account associated with the account number by crediting the account by at least the transaction amount,

whereby the transaction is conducted by the billing system by using the account number and the transaction amount provided by the communication and made available to the billing system by the intelligent network element and the service
10 control point in order to credit the account corresponding to the account number in the billing system by at least the transaction amount.

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